New editorial board

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We are pleased to announce that a new editorial board has been launched. Although the core members of the editorial office will continue to serve for another term, we have added four additional ecologists who will serve as associate editors. The following seven editors manage the review process of submitted manuscripts: Kazunori Sato (Shizuoka University, Hamamatsu; mathematical models), Kohji Yamamura (National Institute for Agro-Environmental Sciences, Tsukuba; biostatistics), Andrew Liebhold (USDA Forest Service; entomology), Eric Post (The Pennsylvania State University, University Park; vertebrate ecology), Yuji Isagi (Kyoto University, Kyoto; plant ecology: genetics), James McGraw (West Virginia University, Morgantown; plant ecology: general), Takashi Noda (Hokkaido University, Sapporo; aquatic ecology). Each submitted manuscript will be assigned to an associate editor based on the relevance of the manuscript's subject matter to the editor's research field, and they will then select one of the editorial board members to serve as a handling editor. The board members are listed on a separate page.

The editorial board has been expanded to accommodate the recent increase in submissions, but current editorial policies will be sustained. Studies on abundances and distributions of individuals and/or species constitute the core of the journal's focus. However, *Population Ecology* also aims to provide contemporary syntheses of diverse research topics, because the research field of population ecology has

come to represent an important crossroads encompassing diverse fields of ecological research, such as community ecology, physiological ecology, genetics, evolution, and global environmental change. For example, in this issue we publish a special feature on community genomics that links genetics with community ecology. In the previous volume we published discussions of rapid adaption (Abrams 2010; Ishii and Shimada 2010; Kawecki 2010; Kishida et al. 2010; Shimada et al. 2010) and trait-mediated indirect interactions (Craig 2010; Miki and Jacquet 2010; Utsumi et al. 2010a, b) in the context of population ecology.

While special features represent an effective outlet for groups of papers focusing on contemporary fields in ecology, original articles still represent the heart of our journal. *Population Ecology* favors research reports that foster new theory, empirical studies based on theory, and theoretical studies which encourage empirical research. The frontier of science has been promoted by describing previously unknown ecological phenomena. The late Professor Tamiji Inoue (1947–1997), who was Chief Editor of *Researches on Population Ecology* between 1992 and 1994, used to say “Discovery always starts from observation of $n = 1$.” Although a large sample size is preferable, it is not reasonable to demand that studies on rare species or rare ecosystems be based upon large sample sizes. It is also sometimes not practical that all studies are sampled over large spatial scales or based upon long time series. When addressing new and unique ecological phenomena, authors should not be too fearful of committing type II errors, which may unfortunately occur as a result of working with small sample sizes. Thus, we encourage authors to contemplate taking risks and to submit papers that propose truly innovative ideas, describe clever new ecological methods, or describe revolutionarily unique population phenomena.

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“Notes and Comments”

Population Ecology continues to publish “Notes and Comments.” Although this category has been used for short articles presenting original data, we would like to make pages in this category available for criticisms of published articles. We published two critical comments (Devink et al. 2011; McKelvey et al. 2011) in this issue on an article published in issue 52-2 (Brodie and Post 2010). Because replies from authors are often essential for reaching a deep understanding of the points raised by the critical comments, the critical comments were published together along with the reply (Brodie and Post 2011). We anticipate that such interactive publications may foster insightful debates in science, and thus we would like to encourage readers to provide critical comments.

Editorial statistics

During the year 2009, a total of 140 manuscripts were submitted from authors located in 31 different countries. Thirty-five (25.0%) manuscripts originated from Europe, Asia (other than Japan) provided 32 (22.9%), North America 24 (17.1%), and Japan 22 (15.7%). The rate of acceptance was 35.3% for noninvited papers excluding manuscripts for special features. The rate of acceptance of manuscripts from Europe (36.1%) was close to the average, while those from Japan, North America, and Oceania were higher than the average.

The average time ($\pm$ SD) between the receipt of a manuscript and return of the first report to the authors was shortened to 38.3 days ($\pm$ 27.7) in 2009 from 47.4 days ($\pm$ 32.1) in 2008. The first round of reviews was completed within 60 days for 109 manuscripts (77.9%), while the number of manuscripts for which the first round of reviews was finished within 90 days was 134 (95.7%). Forty-two manuscripts (30%) were rejected by the editor before being sent to reviewers. We are encouraging handling editors and reviewers to respond to and complete editorial assignments in a timely manner.

Photos on the cover page

Two photos were selected from articles published in 2010, and the other two were selected from this issue.

The photograph on the upper left is of an eagle owl (*Bubo bubo*) that was a 2-year radiotagged female returning to her nest with a mongoose. This is a typical case of superpredation: a predatory interaction among top predators (Lourenço et al. 2011). The photo was taken by a researcher from the Estación Biológica de Doñana

(C.S.I.C.) during a long-term study on this owl species in southern Spain.

Larvae of the polymorphic leaf beetle, *Chrysomela lapponica* (upper right), originally derive their defensive secretion from salicylic glycosides present in their host plants. However, some populations shifted to plants lacking salicylic glycosides. Comparison between five geographically separated populations demonstrated that diet breadth of *C. lapponica* is a local phenomenon, and strategies to adapt to novel hosts may differ among populations (Zvereva et al. 2010).

Saruma henryi is a perennial herb endemic to China with high phylogenetic, ecological and medicinal significances (lower left). It typically occurs at shady and moist sites under temperate deciduous forest at elevations of 600–1600 m. As its distribution has contracted due to overexploitation and habitat destruction, it has been listed as an endangered species and needs urgent protection (Zhou et al. 2010).

The photograph on the lower right is of a female warthog (*Phacocoerus aethiopicus*) feeding her young. In the Mara Region, Kenya, warthog breed seasonally with a birth peak in October–November, producing a typical litter of 2–4 young after a gestation period of 5–6 months. The young are weaned after 3–4 months but get most of their food from grazing after 2 months (Ogutu et al. 2011).

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